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U. S. Department of Agriculture

NEWS
LETTER
AND
PRICE LIST
NOVEMBER, 1949



RUSSWARD
Saintpaulia Growers

629 W. MATTHEWS AVE.

JONESBORO, ARKANSAS

November, 1949

Dear Friends:

We get more requests for bug letters than for any other topic so here goes.

FRET TROUBLES

(Don't worry too much
about these)



Ring Spots—One of the first ailments violet collectors learn about—usually the hard way. Cold water on foliage, cold drafts, sun shining on west foliage can all cause leaf marking. Don't take an unprotected Violet to a sick friend on a cold blustery day. It'll be a speckled mess by the time you get there.

Curling Foliage—If the leaves all over the plant are affected, suspect too strong light. If condition is accompanied by parched-looking blotches (burns), break the sunlight with a lace curtain or cheesecloth. If leaves only in the center of the plant show curling and thickening, see Cyclamen Mite.

Rotting Outer Leaves—Collected mineral salts on the rims of pots can cause the decomposition of leaves resting thereon. Coat rims with paraffin or devise decorative pot covers with aluminum foil. If these leaves suddenly begin rotting at an alarming rate, (one or two a week), it's probably crown rot.

Chewed-Looking Places—These will occur (or most probably will have already occurred when you buy the plant) down close to the crown on the stems. It's caused by dead flowers dropping down into the plant. In the humid greenhouse atmosphere these decompose and sometimes rot out the delicate stems with which they come in contact. Very rarely happens in a home collection where air is dryer and plants are spaced to allow free circulation of air. Rather unsightly scars but otherwise not important. Interesting to note that these scarred leaves are often variegated.

Springtails—White, about the size of the tip end of a fine needle. Found on the bottom of the pot and in saucer. Float on top of water, jump and/or fly. Move so quick you can't even see where they disappear to. Harmless. Water the plant with insecticide solution used for spraying to get rid of them.

Black Flies—or gnats. Slightly larger than springtails. These definitely fly. Often present in manures and hence in some soil mixtures. Live on decayed matter. May indicate presence of crown rot. If their presence is accompanied by very limp foliage, better get busy. Treat these bugs same as springtails.

Double Trouble—What causes double variety buds not to open? Latest dope: insufficient fertilizing. Doubles requires more than average, it seems. Shoot 'em a little extra goo.


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**Streaked Flowers, Bud Blast**—If accompanied by white spots which develop to larger blotches on leaf reverse, see Thrips. Sudden temperature changes cause white streaks which radiate from the center of the blossom to the edge, also some deformity of flowers. Remember to put the windows down on cool nights. If you want to start a good brawl at your Violet Club meeting, ask what causes bud blast. Contending theories: stale air, excessive nitrogen in the soil, low humidity, leaking gas, atomic radiations.

**Ol' Man River**—If you have a plant that's "tired o' livin' and scared o' dyin'"—won't bloom, won't grow, won't die—do this: saw the whole thing off at the soil level. If multiple-crown, separate. Place each crown in a pot or saucer of vermiculite or sterile sand (pour boiling water over it). Keep moist. When (and if) roots begin to form, feed mild nutrient solution. Shift to soil when roots are an inch or so long.

Now, a propos of this last, I should say that plants that fit the description of a disease called "Stunt" have reacted favorably to this treatment. Either what we had wasn't Stunt (supposed to be incurable) at all, or Stunt is caused by soil troubles of some sort and can be overcome. Would appreciate the opinion of some of you violet experts on this.

### POTENTIAL PANIC TROUBLES

(Can kill your plants if neglected)

**Mealybugs**—Easily recognized by cottony mass (in which eggs are laid) down in the plant or on leaf reverse. Bugs white, flattish, very slow-moving. Young bugs pinkish, pin-head size. Easy to clean up if you only have a few. Swab off with cotton-tipped toothpick dipped in alcohol. Dip badly infested plants in NNOR spray solution.

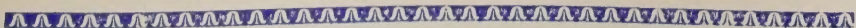
**Droopy Foliage**—If plant is limp all over and stays that way even after watering, (1) the roots are rotting, or (2) the crown is rotting, or (3) you have root nematodes. Slicing the crown off at soil level, scraping out all trace of brown matter, and re-rooting on sand, water, or vermiculite will foil the first two but will only delay the action of the last. See below for advanced cases of each. Rots thrive in soggy dirt. Roots don't. Water carefully. Remember that the weather can foul you up on this. Be niggardly about watering during damp days or seasons.

**Aphids**—Not very likely to get these. Pale green variety sometimes attacks violets. Pin-head size slow-moving sucking insects. Tend to cluster together. Nicotine sulphate (Black Leaf 40) for these.

### PANIC TROUBLES

(Call out the squad)

**Advanced Crown Rot**—Leaves decompose one by one up the crown. If the violet is a very flat, one-crown job, it can be laid low in 24 hours. Not





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much you can do if you haven't tended to it at the droopy stage. Save what leaves you can as starts for new plants.

Nematodes—Microscopic parasitic worms which work their way inside the roots, forming knots and small swellings which you can see if you're curious enough to wash all the dirt off and take a chance on stopping up the kitchen sink. Re-rooting will delay the action on these but sooner or later they'll probably turn up again. Best preventative: sterilizing soil.

Cyclamen Mite—Distorted leaves in center of plant caused by feeding of tiny (invisible to naked eye) insects which prefer tender, young leaves. Best preventative: regular spraying or sodium selenate treatment. Everybody has a pet cure for this. So do we. Moth-ball fumigation is cheap and easy. A child of three can do it. Of course, it doesn't always kill the mites, but neither does any other treatment. Usually the second or third try will get them. Place your plant, together with a handful of moth-balls (scant if you have big hands) in an airtight container. This may be a cardboard box, raincoat, kettle, bread box, oven (unheated), paper bag, etc. The plant **MUST** be dry or the fumes will kill it. Also, don't let the moth-balls touch the foliage. Leave for twelve hours. Don't let yourself backslide about isolating any infested plants regardless of what kind of bug is involved. Isolation is a precaution that pays off big dividends.

Thrips—Little black bugs size of sharp end of a pin, one-eighth to one-sixteenth of an inch long. Very active. Lay eggs in plant tissue, on violets usually leaf reverse. Recognized as whitish spots which enlarge to dead-looking blotches as eggs hatch and the young feed on surrounding Saint-paulia. The adults take to cavorting around inside the flower buds which causes such irregularities as streaked flowers, distortion and premature dropping of flowers and buds. Try NNOR dip and keep a sharp eye out for recurrences.

Now, you all, there are just lots and lots of things about violets that we don't know. For that matter, there are lots of things about 'em that nobody knows. Violets are still new, and in a very real sense, everybody, professional and amateur, is experimenting. If you experience an obscure ailment of some sort, or find a good remedy for already known diseases and pests, let people know about it. Write to us, or to any other grower, or to the African Violet Society. Your experience may not be new at all. On the other hand, coupled with the experience of others, it may be very valuable. One request: be specific in your descriptions. "Little bugs" is a total loss. All bugs are little. **HOW** little. See?

After reading this, don't go get worried over your collection. You probably don't have half the things you'll think you do. People wouldn't have nearly as much trouble growing violets if they just relaxed and kept their pores open.

Yours,

"Russ"

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**Sustaining Member African Violet Society of America, Inc.**

Ship To \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Street or R.F.D. \_\_\_\_\_

Town and State \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \$\_\_\_\_\_

If this order is being sent as a gift, please write your own name and address below, since we would like to notify you of shipment.

Gift wrapping on request.

[illegible]

ARKANSAS CUSTOMERS: ADD 2% SALES TAX

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# PRICE LIST

## LADY GENEVA (Patented)

If you go in for violets in a big way, you'll want to be one of the first to own this lovely variety. Introduced by a large grower on the West Coast only a short while ago, it has caught on like wild fire. Deep blue flower edged with pure white border. Foliage tapered, olive green.

**\$3.00**

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**Blue Butterfly**—These are magnificent plants. Spread of at least 12 inches. Lovely slender flower petals, medium pale blue. Tapered medium green leaves ----- **\$1.75**

**Blue Velvet**—Featured on cover of Violet Magazine last year. Dark slick green, heavy quilting on leaves, rose-tinted reverse. Flower fine medium blue ----- **\$1.75**

**Blue Eyes**—A most satisfactory light blue. Light green leaves turn quite dark and slick with age of plant ----- **\$1.75**

**Double Orchid**—There are several varieties on the market which answer the description of this plant. Very free-blooming, tapered foliage. Fine collector's item ----- **\$2.00**

**Double Duchess Amazon**—Just what it says. Heavy, hairy foliage with mammoth double blue flower----- **\$2.00**

**Jade**—This is the kind of fine variety that takes prizes at shows. Good bloomer (medium blue). Unusual fine, rich green foliage ----- **\$2.00**

**Kewensis**—Will stand a phenomenal amount of rough handling and will propagate very quickly. Medium pale, delicate flowers, slender stems and light green foliage. Excellent as gift for someone who knows literally nothing about violets ---- **\$1.75**

**Moire**—This variety and the new Lady Geneva blaze the trail of flower variegation. Flower dark blue with streaks of slightly paler blue from center to edge of petal. Beautiful effect. Pale green foliage darkens with age of plant ----- **\$2.00**

**Old Lace**—Everybody who visits the greenhouse here always winds up buying a "Lace". Rather dwarf. Mature plants measure only about 8 inches across. Very deeply scalloped leaves, Blue Girl flower ----- **\$2.00**



**Purple Beauty**—We're happy to be able to offer this one again. Dark purple with slight rosy tinge. Glossy, quilted leaves with red reverse. Some spooning. One of our most popular varieties **\$1.75**

**Rose Purple**—This resembles Norseman except that is much, much more so. Grows to gigantic proportions if given generous root room **\$2.00**

**Ruffles**—This is the plant for those skeptical souls who have been soured by extravagant descriptions of the mail-order Violet hucksters. Regardless of what plants you have in your collection, Ruffles will be different from any of the others. Dark, dark green tapered leaves with purple-red leaf reverse. Flowers medium blue but insignificant beside the magnificent foliage **\$2.00**

**Starlight** (Waterlily)—Rather to our surprise, this number does a perfectly superb job of blooming. Medium to pale blue flowers, very dark foliage. A fine plant **\$2.25**

**Thirty-Two**—Glossy, neat foliage somewhat like Neptune. Flower about the shade of Lavender Lady. Good big plants of this **\$1.75**

**Tinted Lady**—Palest of the blues. Dark green, tapered foliage. Extremely popular **\$1.75**

**Von Deitrich**—Another gorgeous plant most outstanding for its foliage. Sharply tapered leaves, distinct veining. Medium blue flower **\$2.00**

## DUPONT HYBRIDS

Quite a furor being made in the Violet world about these. Have never seen mature plants but those who have say they are breathtaking. Many of these are multiple-crown.

|                             |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| No. 1 (darkest blue) .....  | \$2.50 |
| No. 5 (lightest blue) ..... | \$2.50 |
| DuPont Silver Pink .....    | \$2.50 |

**The Three for \$6.50**

## NOVEMBER OFFERS ON ALL RUSSWARD PLANTS THIS MONTH ONLY

|                  |        |
|------------------|--------|
| \$1.25 Varieties |        |
| Any 5 .....      | \$5.25 |
| YOU SAVE \$1.00  |        |
| \$1.50 Varieties |        |
| Any 5 .....      | \$6.25 |
| YOU SAVE \$1.25  |        |
| \$1.75 Varieties |        |
| Any 5 .....      | \$7.25 |
| YOU SAVE \$1.50  |        |
| \$2.00 Varieties |        |
| Any 5 .....      | \$8.25 |
| YOU SAVE \$1.75  |        |



## STANDARD VARIETIES

**\$1.25**

|                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Blue Bird          | Pink Beauty (Pat'd) |
| Blue Boy           | Blue Girl (Pat'd)   |
| Blush Maid         | Sapphire            |
| Sailor Boy         | Viking              |
| White Lady (Pat'd) |                     |

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**\$1.50 ea.**

|                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Amethyst (blue) | Lavender Lady |
| Heavenly Blue   | Myrtle        |
| Ionantha        | Norseman      |
| Neptune         | West Coast    |
|                 | Amethyst      |

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**\$1.75 ea.**

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| Red Head             | Red Girl   |
| Azure Glory          | Bi-Color   |
| Double Duchess       | Frieda     |
| Dupont Lavender Pink | Mrs. Boles |
| Redland              |            |

**Winter Shipments** — Yes, we ship all winter wherever possible. After December we will not attempt any shipments at all to the extreme northern states. The belt from Nebraska and Kansas east to Pennsylvania and Virginia is shipped according to the weather map. Shipments directly east, west, and south can be made pretty steadily with the exception of perhaps a few days here and there. The guarantee holds regardless of the weather. Frozen plants may be recognized by a stewed appearance, strangely enough.

**Please Note:** Under no circumstances will any shipments be made after December 12. We will be glad to send appropriately wrapped plants as Christmas gifts, but please get in these orders early. All the "Fragile" stickers in the world don't mean anything to the postal clerks during the Christmas mail rush.

**Remit** by money order or check when possible. It's not a very good idea to send large amounts of cash through the mail.

**Shipping Information:** Plants shipped in 2½ inch pots unless requested otherwise. Cultural instructions included. List price includes packing and mailing cost. Orders \$5.00 and over sent special delivery or special handling if to box number or RFD. We guarantee safe arrival of plants. For reference,

ASK OUR CUSTOMERS